

THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL

A MONTHLY RECORD AND REVIEW

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF WORSHIP MUSIC IN THE NONCONFORMIST CHURCHES.

No. 44.

AUGUST 1891.

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EDITED BY E. MINSHALL,

Organist and Director of the Music at the City Temple,
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The Morals of Choir-Singers.

WE reprint, in another column, a correspondence that has lately appeared in *The Christian World* in reference to Sunday evening choir practices in Wales. The individual who introduced the subject has recently been on a visit to that country, and apparently has made it his business to inquire into the morals of those young people who attend the choir practices. He has absolutely no personal knowledge whatever; but some persons, whom he describes as holding responsible and official positions, have given him information which he considers justifies him in writing to our contemporary, pointing out that "serious irregularities and danger to morals have repeatedly occurred from the circumstances under which the Sunday night practice in various chapels is conducted."

To make so serious an accusation—especially upon such slender evidence—against the morality of such a large body of young people, many of whom are members of the church, is most unjust, and deserves severe censure. If one or two singers have gone wrong, certainly the choir practices must not be held responsible. Further, it is

exceedingly unfair, because of the sins of a few, to suspect the morality of all the singers.

And why should the choir members be specially selected for suspicion? Have there been no black sheep amongst the congregations? Are the morals of the people in the pews so much purer, that there is no risk of "serious irregularities" if they walk home through lonely lanes after service? Why should the minister, deacons, and congregation be allowed out after dark without "danger," and the choir be suspected of yielding to sin?

In reply to these questions, we unhesitatingly affirm that choir singers, whether Welsh, English, or Scotch, are, taking them as a whole, not only thoroughly moral, but are Christian young people, who would fly from sin quite as quickly as the man who has hurled such a cruel accusation against them.

We are sorry to have to refer to such an unpleasant subject, but our intimate knowledge of the thorough goodness of the Welsh singers compels us to say a word on their behalf, when their character is assailed in so unjust and scandalous a manner.

The Tonic Sol-fa Jubilee.

OUR Tonic Sol-fa friends have, during the past month, been celebrating their jubilee, and most successful and inspiring the meetings were. We would most heartily offer our congratulations to the Sol-faists on the progress they are making, and on the great work they have done in popularising music in all parts of the world. From small beginnings, and in spite of much opposition, the system has grown step by step, until it has become a mighty power.

The Nonconformist churches owe much to Tonic Sol-fa. It has been the starting-point of many of our choirs, the mainstay of others, and has been the system adopted for teaching our Sunday-school children. The Rev. John Curwen was a Congregational minister, and his son, Mr. J. Spencer Curwen, the honoured President of the Tonic Sol-fa College, has by his writings, his speeches, and his influence generally, greatly helped the movement for the improvement of Congregational singing. Upon "church music" he is no mean authority: as a broad thinker and a man of sound judgment his suggestions are always worthy of the best consideration.

Years ago very much prejudice existed between Old Notationists and Sol-faists. The former declared that the Sol-fa system was bad, or at best was only fit for very elementary purposes. On the other hand, the Sol-faists were of opinion that their system was the only one that could make perfect singers, and that Old Notationists were not efficient readers. We are glad to believe that both parties now admit that each system has its advantages. A person who is thoroughly acquainted with both notations is a more capable musician than he who only understands one.

That Sol-fa will grow there cannot be a doubt.

Our hope is that its growth may be speedy, and that its influence may be more extensive.

THE late Mr. W. H. Gladstone was a very capable musician. Not only was he a good organist, but he wrote several effective anthems and psalm tunes.

THE Rev. Edward Husband, incumbent of St. Michael's, Folkestone, is his own organist, and very efficiently he discharges the duties. He recently gave his 300th recital. It is stated that he has conducted more than 4,000 choir practices, and played at more than 9,000 full services.

The Organist's Magazine of Voluntaries has been received with so much favour that it has been decided to increase its size. The next number will contain eight pages of music and a cover. Further particulars will be given next month.

A CORRESPONDENT in the midland counties sends us the following story, for the truth of which he says he can vouch: "At a certain Wesleyan chapel in this town they are in the habit of taking the tune which is usually sung to the hymn 'Around the throne of God in heaven,' and putting it to other hymns. They sing it, for instance, to 'There is a fountain filled with blood,' and with the chorus at the end of each verse, they get the following effect in the last verse:—

'When this poor lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave.
Singing glory,' etc.

This has been sung time after time with great seriousness, no one, apparently, having detected the ludicrous ending." We have heard of this tune causing startling effects in connection with some other hymns. For instance, this was once sung in a village chapel:—

"Jesus, the name high over all
In hell, or earth, or sky;
Angels and men before it fall,
And devils fear and fly.
Singing glory, glory, glory."

It seems hard for some people to get over their prejudice against musical instruments. A Yorkshire choirmaster recently told us that, when teaching the Sunday-school children the music for the anniversary services, he found it so trying to his voice that he got a friend who played the cornet to come in and play the melody. The deacons, however, objected to that "profane instrument," and so the poor man had to return to his shouting. We are afraid these deacons will be very uncomfortable in heaven, where there is so much music. That, perhaps, will be their reward for making others uncomfortable here below.

At one of the most flourishing churches in the south of England, where they raise several thousands a year, a little treat (costing about £5) was given to the choir last year. Some one interested in the music of the church suggested to the deacons

that a similar acknowledgment should be given this year. This was refused, because "it would then begin to be regarded as an annual thing." Quite so, and it ought certainly to be an "annual thing," only on a more liberal scale. Though the income is so large, a paltry £5 is considered sufficient to spend on the choir, but that not every year. It would teach the authorities a wholesome lesson if the choir were to "strike."

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39. Mixture	2 ranks —
40. Trombone	16
41. Clarion	8

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42. Swell to Great.	45. Swell to Pedal.
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44. Sub-octave to Swell.	47. Choir to Pedal.

4 Composition Pedals to Great Organ.
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Night Choir Practice.

THE following correspondence has appeared in *The Christian World*:-

A SERIOUS DANGER.

(To the Editor of THE CHRISTIAN WORLD.)

SIR,—During a recent visit to Wales I was informed by several persons in responsible and official positions that serious irregularities and danger to morals have repeatedly occurred from the circumstances under which the Sunday night choir practice in various chapels is conducted. It is the custom in some places for the practice to take place *after* the evening service (!), and then at the unseemly hours of nine or ten at night the young men and women disperse to their homes. It is obvious that these nocturnal walks through dark lanes and lonely places of young persons under such circumstances is open to the gravest objection, and, indeed, in repeated instances, fallen girls have stated that their seduction took place in connection with these Sunday night parties. Not long ago, even the leader of a chapel choir was imprisoned for an attempted assault upon one of the girls in his choir.

My object in writing to you is to invite ministers of the Welsh chapels, and the influential members of their congregations, to devote increased attention to the prevention of such scandals.—Yours truly,

VIATOR.

(To the Editor of THE CHRISTIAN WORLD.)

SIR,—Having had a very close acquaintance with Welsh singers for nearly thirty years (a part of that time having been spent amongst them), I must in the strongest possible manner protest against the scandalous accusation brought against their moral character by your correspondent 'Viator.' During the above-mentioned period I have never once heard even a whisper of anything against any of the singers that could by any stretch of imagination be described as 'serious irregularities and danger to morals.' Yet this individual (who may well be ashamed to give his name), after merely 'a recent visit' to Wales, and on the strength of something that was told him, sits down and casts a vile slur on the morality of the Welsh singers as a body. Before believing there is even a shadow of truth in the cases he refers to, we must know who Viator's informants are and the nature of the information they gave him.

Supposing for a moment this 'serious danger' does exist, then, according to 'Viator's' theory, we ought also to give up Sunday evening services and all evening meetings of any kind, as well as choir practices, for the occupants of the choir pew are certainly quite as moral as the congregation.

I feel sure that ninety-five out of every hundred ministers in Wales will agree with me in saying that Viator's letter is a most unjust and cruel accusation against persons whose characters will compare most favourably with any other class of people in any part of the world.—Yours truly,

E. MINSHALL.

THE CITY TEMPLE.

(To the Editor of THE CHRISTIAN WORLD.)

SIR,—In THE CHRISTIAN WORLD of this week I see a letter from 'Viator' under the above heading. Now I value his good feeling for the safety of the young people of Wales, for I feel that there is much need of protecting them, but I am doubtful whether he has been rightly informed on the subject. The connecting of the 'serious irregularities and danger to morals' with the 'Sunday night choir practice in the various chapels' is a very unfair thing, and reflects upon the noble class of young people who are doing credit to their church and nation in that direction, and other nations would do

well in following their example. I am not defending the purity of society in Wales, but after some years in the ministry there I found that the greatest amount of 'irregularity' and 'immorality' were found among the young people who would not stay for the choir practice or *Gypeillack* (society). I found that the young people who devoted their time for some real work in the churches in the cause of humanity and God were the most regular in moral habits. It stands to reason that those who are doing no practical good fall into temptation.—Yours truly,

VIDI.

(To the Editor of THE CHRISTIAN WORLD.)

SIR,—I read the terrible indictment of 'Viator' in your columns against a custom that obtains much favour in Wales. I am one of those people whom 'Viator' charges with serious practices, and have followed the singing school for twenty-five years or more, and since reading the charge of 'Viator' and his advice, I see, upon the reviewing of the whole experience I have had, that if I had a chance of recasting my life it would have been on the same lines again. I cannot during my experience recall more than one case that 'Viator' could rely upon; that had assumed another colour when it reached the magistrates' dock. I think the charge is unfounded and cannot be sustained.—Yours,

THOMAS JAMES.

PORTHCAWL.

FOLKESTONE AND DOVER NONCONFORMIST CHOIR UNION.

THESE two unions recently combined to repeat the Crystal Palace programme in Folkestone Congregational Church (under the presidency of the Mayor). There was a crowded and appreciative audience. Messrs. Bramley and Lepper conducted very efficiently, and Mrs. Walton presided at the organ with great ability. The verse parts in the anthems were tastefully rendered by Misses Lane and Taylor, and Messrs. Linom and Tucker. The anthems, choruses, and part-songs went with spirit, and were very well received. Mr. Alexander Tucker gave in his well-known style "Behold I stand at the door" and "Two Twilights," his fine voice being much enjoyed. Miss Elgar sang with much taste "Come unto Me" and "God shall wipe away all tears." Miss Lane, a favourite singer in Folkestone, gave a pleasing rendering of "The ripple of the river"; and Miss Morgan was successful in "I know that my Redeemer liveth." The whole concert was a distinct success.

A MARVELLOUS MUSICAL BABY.—The late Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley, the eminent musician and composer, was a marvel of precocity. He could discriminate regarding the airs played by his sisters when he was only three months old! At that exceedingly early period in his earthly pilgrimage, he evinced a special fondness for the waltz in *Der Freischütz*. Long before he could speak he was able to repeat melodies he had heard, and always in the correct key. At the age of two he could distinguish between tonic and dominant harmony; at three he hummed original airs in regular measure and rhythm. A little later he displayed intuitive ideas as to correct modulation. He could detect the prevailing note in ordinary noises, and one day he caused much amusement by exclaiming, "Only think, papa blows his nose in G!"



Music at George Street Congregational Church, Oxford.

NONCONFORMITY is naturally at some disadvantage in Oxford. It has to be content, so to speak, with those who have escaped the meshes of the net so warily spread by the Establishment, whose churches are perhaps more relatively numerous in Oxford than in any other town in the kingdom. And at more than one of these churches there are elaborate musical services, with the additional attractions of picturesque processions and incense-swinging acolytes. But so far as music is concerned, and within the limitations of the Nonconformist service, the church named at the head of this article is well abreast with these forward-moving times. Architecturally, the church has little to boast of. The exterior, indeed, is a somewhat imposing example of the Early English style, but the interior shows one of those solid substantial flat-roofed rooms whose barn-like character has brought scorn and undeserved disgrace on Dissent. But this church has had a cultured pastor in the Rev. Robert Harley, M.A., Fellow of the Royal Society, an eminent scientist and schoolmaster, who, though no longer pastor, still attends the church, we believe, with his family.

On the occasion of our visit, the evening of the Sunday-school anniversary services, we found the body of the church about three-parts full, the galleries almost empty, with the exception of three or four seats reserved for the choir in front of the organ, which is placed in the gallery opposite the pulpit. It is a very fair two-manual instrument of some twenty stops, built in 1878 by C. Martin, of

Oxford, and we may state at this point that it is admirably handled by Miss Clara Harley (a daughter of the retired pastor), who has cultivated a crisp and decided style of playing, and treats the pedals not in that distrustful, deprecatory, and to a listener distressing way which marks some lady players. Her opening voluntary was Smart's "Andante in A," played clearly and with point; this was followed by Hymn 714 in the old Congregational Hymn Book, "Hallelujah, song of gladness," to a tune in the new Congregational Hymnal—a strange conjunction. The choir, to the number of thirty odd, in which the parts were well balanced, at once showed evidence of careful training. Their attack was prompt, enunciation clear, and time, on the whole, admirable. We understand that Mr. Edgar Mills, a former organist of the church, and of Balliol College, and music-master in the Oxford High School, is responsible for the direction of the choir. Further evidence of his ability was shown in the chanting of Psalms liii. and liv. to Flintoft in A minor and a Gregorian peregrine tone. Here the pointing was most carefully attended to, and an appreciable rest was observed at each comma,—a point which it is difficult to induce a choir to notice, but, which noticed, immensely improves the effect. The anthem was Stainer's "What are these?" from the new Congregational Hymnal, on the whole well sung, especially at the vigorous opening and its repetition. The beautiful soprano phrase to the words, "And God shall wipe away all tears," was well sung by one voice: we think it would be more effective if sung by all the sopranos; and the basses failed, as so many of their *confrères* have done elsewhere, to give the B \flat in the third bar from the end.

The remainder of the service consisted of the hymns; "O, happy band of pilgrims," "There is a land of pure delight," and "I give my heart to Thee"—all to well-known tunes, and all sung heartily. The sermon, a most thoughtful, earnest and practical discourse on the text, "If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments," was preached by the Rev. C. A. Davis, of Reading. It was announced that a choir practice would be held after the service, another on the Thursday evening, and that on Wednesday the choir would give a musical service—all showing that music is thought highly of by the people of George Street.

In conclusion, there are one or two things which we should like to point out in the way of friendly advice to the choir. (1) *Sing more softly* where the nature of the words demands soft singing. With this should be coupled (2) a caution to beware of slackening speed in soft passages; and (3) still more important, to guard against a slight tendency to *flatten*, noticeable sometimes in soft parts, which, we are bound to say, was due to the tenors. In fine, Mr. Mills has at his command excellent materials, which he has evidently trained with admirable skill, and it would be a pity if, for want of a little more particular attention to his instructions, the choir should not eradicate the few faults we have hinted at.

Music at the International Congregational Council.

ALTHOUGH no place was found for consideration of "church music," some attention was given to it in the meetings of the International Council. The service in connection with the Council Sermon at the City Temple was announced to be "Full Choral." Mr. Minshall got together over a hundred singers, from the ranks of the N. C. U., and most efficiently did they lead the singing. The voices were greatly helped by two cornets, a trombone and euphonium. The service opened with "O worship the King," which went with splendid swing, the vast congregation joining very heartily. After a Scripture lesson, Barnby's fine anthem, "I will give thanks," was sung very steadily and brightly. The quartett was most tastefully rendered by Misses Emily Davies and Edith Hands, and Messrs. T. R. Croger and W. P. Richards. The brass instruments joined in the chorale with wonderfully fine effect. After prayer, the hymn, "Who is on the Lord's side?" was vigorously sung. Then came the sermon, by Dr. Goodwin, of Chicago, which as regards matter was exceedingly disappointing, and its length (more than an hour and a half) wearied every one. Before the preacher had finished hundreds of the congregation had left. How any man could preach such a lengthy discourse to a crowded congregation on a hot July evening passes comprehension. The remainder of the musical service had to be curtailed. A solo by Miss Emily Davies was omitted; also several verses of the last hymn, and the final anthem was given by a greatly reduced choir to almost empty pews.

On "Council Sunday," July 19th, in some twenty-five churches, delegates were to occupy the pulpit; and in the City Temple, Union Chapel, Islington, Christ Church, Westminster, and Park Chapel, Crouch End, the evening sermon was choral.

THE CITY TEMPLE.

The musical service was much as usual, and was evidently enjoyed by an immense congregation which crowded the aisles and staircases, some hundreds having to be turned away from the doors. Precisely at seven o'clock the organ voluntary finished, and the congregation rose to sing the Confession to Tallis's music with a free organ accompaniment. Then followed a brief prayer and the hymn "Praise my soul," to Goss's splendid tune. The effect of the unison voices with the support of the brass instruments was very fine; and the contrast obtained by the women alone singing the third verse was most appropriate. After a Scripture lesson, Barnby's anthem, "Lift up your hearts," from the Congregational Church Hymnal, was given by the choir alone, the congregation remaining seated. The solo was admirably sung by Mr. Alexander Tucker. At the *ff* passage, "Glory be to Thee," the brass instruments came in with thrilling effect. This anthem, which is one of the finest and most difficult in the hymnal, is one of Mr. Barnby's best pieces for church use.

The hymn before the sermon was "Who is this, so weak and helpless?" which was sung to *Scopas*. The choir alone sang the first four lines of each verse, the congregation joining in the second half of the verses. The first four lines of the third verse were most sympathetically sung by Miss Edith Hands, many of the congregation being moved to tears by her refined and truly religious singing.

Dr. Parker preached, and was accompanied in the pulpit by Dr. J. Morison, Dr. Adamson, and other ministers. During the discourse he asked for a verse of "All hail the power of Jesu's name!" which the congregation gave very vigorously.

After the sermon, Miss Hands sang with great

feeling, "God shall wipe away all tears," as a solo. The last hymn was "March on, march on, ye soldiers true," to Barnby's music. This martial hymn went with great spirit and heartiness, the brass instruments again telling out well. As a concluding voluntary, Mr. George Harlow played as a cornet solo "The Lost Chord," accompanied by the organ, most of the congregation remaining seated till it was finished.

UNION CHAPEL, ISLINGTON.

A neat little book, containing the music and words of the anthems, chants, and hymns to be sung, had been specially printed for the occasion, and was distributed in the seats throughout the chapel. A very large congregation was present, and the choir mustered in goodly numbers. Mr. Fountain Meen presided at the fine organ, and played the Andante from Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto as an opening voluntary. Dr. Allon then offered a short prayer and read the 148th Psalm.



MR. FOUNTAIN MEEN.

He then made some interesting and well-chosen remarks upon Praise in Worship, more particularly as to the *form* (assuming that every one agreed as to the *religious* aspect of praise). He pointed out that prayer was the expression of sorrow or pain, or a want, but that praise was the expression of joy, and was the highest expression of religious life. Praise should be in its proper place, should be hearty, reverent, and not adulterated. He made a strong point that every one should sing, and not praise by proxy, and stated that the choir was to lead the singing, not to sing to the congregation. He then made some remarks upon the form of the anthem, and the following anthems were sung: viz., "O taste and see" (*Goss*), "Jesu, Word of God Incarnate" (*Gounod*), "How lovely are the messengers" (*Mendelssohn*), and "How holy is this place" (*E. Prout*).

Dr. Allon then read 2 Chronicles, chap. v., and after this the "Hallelujah Chorus" (*Handel*) was sung.

Some remarks on chants and chanting were then made by Dr. Allon, who pointed out that the Psalms

were meant for singing and not for reading, that, in his opinion, chanting was the most articulate form of praise, being unbound by rhythm, and that good chanting was really good musical reading.

The following chants were then sung: viz., "O Saviour of the world," to ninth Gregorian tone; Magnificat, to first tone and second ending (Dr. Allon remarked that this was the chant selected for the Magnificat in King Edward VI.'s Prayer Book); the 142nd Psalm, to Tallis's chant in E minor (the tenor part was very effective in this chant); and Psalms xlii. and xliii., to single chants by Cooke and Felton.

Dr. Allon proceeded to make some remarks upon hymns, stating that the hymns and tunes should be the peculiar care of the minister, that they should be appropriate to each other and to the particular occasion of use, that the best hymns and tunes of all ages should be used, and that he was strongly in favour of each hymn having its own appropriate tune.

The hymns sung were: "Lo, the storms of life are breaking," to Dr. Gauntlett's tune *Maldon*; "The Church's one foundation," to Wesley's tune *Aurelia*; "The way is long," to Dr. Dykes' tune *Via Crucis* (Dr. Allon mentioned this was the last tune Dr. Dykes wrote, and he wrote it for Dr. Allon's new hymnal); "Who is this, so weak?" to Hancock's tune *Scopas*; "My Saviour, 'mid life's varied scene," to E. Prout's tune *Willerby*; "Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts," to *Holley*; and "Sun of my soul," to Oakeley's tune *Abends*.

Dr. Allon then brought the service (which had lasted from 6.30 to 9 o'clock) to a close with the Benediction.

The anthems, chants, and hymns chosen were diversified, and afforded good specimens of the different styles of church music, and the remarks interspersed by Dr. Allon were appropriate and interesting.

With regard to the singing, it was on the whole very good. The choir sang well throughout, and appeared to be as fresh at the finish as at the beginning. Curiously, the best-sung pieces were the anthems, the chanting being left almost entirely to the choir, and the congregation were inclined to drag in the hymns. The anthems, however, went steadily, and with good tone and attention to light and shade.

Mr. Meen accompanied most judiciously throughout, and at the close played Smart's Air with variations as the closing voluntary.

CHRIST CHURCH, WESTMINSTER BRIDGE ROAD.

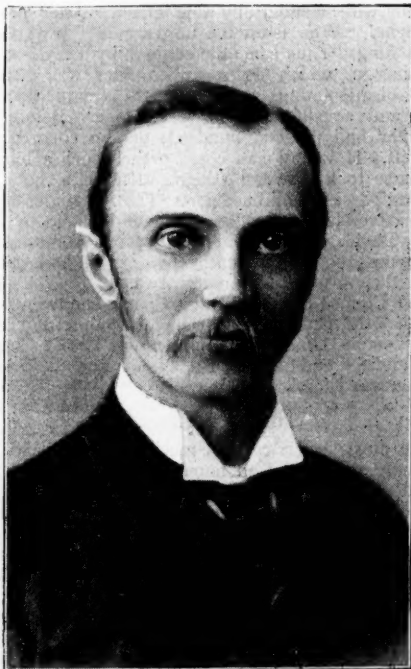
The choral service at this church was, with the exception of a special anthem, the usual evening service, consisting of three well-known hymns, the Psalms for the day (sung to a chant in F by Turle), the Canticles, the Responses (Ferial), and Sir John Stainer's seven-fold Amen (sung kneeling and without accompaniment).

The choice of the anthem—Gounod's, "From Thy love as a Father" (*Redemption*)—proved a most happy one, for it was in perfect keeping with the sermon, which was based on the 9th and 12th verses of the 15th chapter of St. John's Gospel—"As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you," etc. It is needless to say that its rendering by Miss Edith Luke (the leading soprano) and the choir was tasteful and impressive. Indeed, the whole service was thoroughly well rendered, and was bright as well as devotional. The congregation joined most heartily in the hymns and canticles, and in the responses to the liturgy. The Rev. Newman Hall (pastor) read the prayers, in one of which he asked the prayers of the congregation on behalf of Mr. Spurgeon.

Mr. J. R. Griffiths, the organist of the church, presided at the organ, and played as voluntaries a soft movement by Heller and a prelude and fugue by Bach.

The preacher, the Rev. Dr. Calkins, in his sermon, pointed out that from the words contained in the text we find that the love of God is not limited, but spread over

the whole universe. If we might make a comparison of our Lord's words, this passage would be found to be the most wonderful that had ever been spoken on earth. Human affection, however lasting, may sometimes be looked upon with suspicion, and very often it is found to be fickle, but God's love for us is constant and unchangeable, and surpasses the utmost ideas of human love. He also said that with love should be coupled obedience. Obedience was the outcome, the fruit of love. And in return for God's love to us we should love Him and subject ourselves to His commandments. One of the happiest conversations he had ever had was with a gentleman who held a high office in the United States army. This gentleman one day called upon him and said that he wished to live for Christ, and asked what he must do, and said that as he gave his orders to his soldiers, so must the minister tell him as though from God what work there was for him to do, for he was determined to be all and all for Christ. And shortly



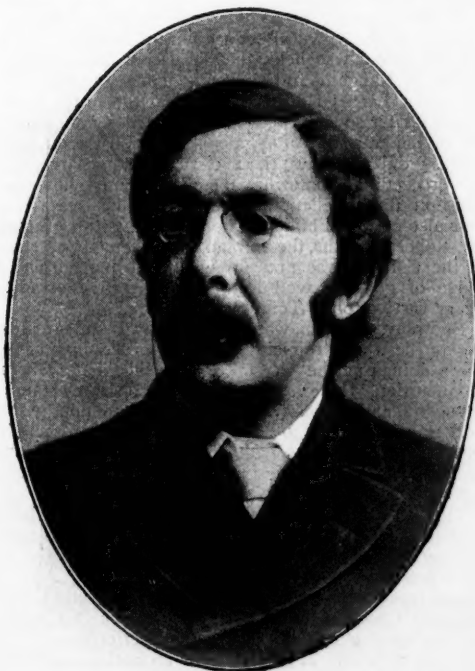
MR. J. R. GRIFFITHS.

afterwards he, in company with several young persons, was admitted publicly into the membership of the church. Love was a subtle something that bound people to one another, however distant apart they may be placed. He and the other American delegates would this week be saying good-bye to their friends in England, and in many cases it would be good-bye for ever, but love would bridge over the gulf until they met in heaven and beheld one another face to face.

PARK CHAPEL, CROUCH END.

The special "Service of Praise" at Park Chapel, Crouch End, was led by an enlarged choir of nearly sixty singers, and was marked by all the culture and refinement for which the church has achieved a reputation. A specially printed order of service was placed in the pews, together with a reprint of part of a service for the opening of public worship, taken from the Sunday School Union's new "Service Book for Church and School." This consisted of portions of Psalm cviii.,

sentences read by the minister, alternating with musical responses by the people. The musical setting was by Mr. Josiah Booth, the well-known organist of the church. The hymn, "Now thank we all our God," was taken at stately pace to Crüger's Chorale. Between the lessons, Barnby's setting of part of Rev. vii. (Chant 142 in Congregational Church Hymnal) was sung. In this the congregation joined heartily, and with due attention to expression and phrasing. A magnificat in D, by Mr. Booth, was next sung by the choir alone. The music had evidently been well rehearsed, and the closing "Gloria" was specially effective, though a little marred by one or two basses forcing their voices in the unison passages. Then came the most impressive item of the whole service—Ebenezer Elliott's hymn, "When wilt Thou save the people?" to *Commonwealth*. This dramatic tune, with its change of key and style, is by no means easy to sing; but the congregation here was fully equal to it, and sang the hymn with excellent



MR. JOSIAH BOOTH.

phrasing and feeling. The *crescendo* towards the end, working up to the climax on the words, "God save the people," had a most imposing effect as sung by the large mass of voices. Mr. Rowland then gave an address on the "Service of Song in the House of the Lord." Basing his remarks on the opening verses of Psalm cxxv., he pointed out that the service of praise had always been of great importance in God's house. Many passages of the Psalms were clearly intended to be used as musical responses. The call to praise involved consecration on the part of the singer, who must himself be responsible for the honesty of his praises. The songs of the temple were contagious. Hymns and anthems often call forth the devotion of the worshipper more than the prayers. The words we sing are the outcome of the religious experiences of the noblest men of all ages; they enshrine the truths of religion and often safeguard its creeds. Amid the contentions of sects, the psalmody of the Church is evidence to the world of the underlying unity. The songs of Zion, said Mr. Rowland in closing, often bring to depressed and troubled souls the message

which was lacking in the preacher's utterances. The whole tenor of the address, of which we have only given an outline, showed Mr. Rowland's active sympathy and interest in his subject.

After the sermon came the familiar "Saviour, again," to *Pax Dei*, and the service closed with Woodward's anthem, "The radiant morn has passed away." In looking round the church, one could not help remarking the large proportion of worshippers using music books; part-singing was going on all over the church, and the result was a service thoroughly congregational, and yet much above the average in point of culture and beauty.

The Tonic Sol-fa Jubilee Meetings.

THE formidable list of engagements issued by the Jubilee Committee opened in a manner the appropriateness of which was acknowledged by all who have followed the intimate connection of the Tonic Sol-fa movement with congregational psalmody and church music. The Festival Services in St. Paul's Cathedral, held on July 7th, were felt to be a fitting prelude to the festivities of the following week. The music was led by a special choir of five hundred voices, occupying the choir stalls and seats adjoining; the space under the dome was filled by ticket-holders, mostly members of Sol-fa choral societies, and the nave was open to the general public. By the hour of commencement the cathedral was well filled, right down to the great doors. It was well understood that the service was not to be left to the special choir, who indeed had only one opportunity afforded them of singing alone. In the opening *Old Hundred* the people gave earnest at once of their intention to take their full part. The hymn went with stately grandeur and fine volume. The responses were sung to Tallis's familiar music. The psalms were set to chants by Goss, Hayes, and Cooke, the pointing being taken from the Cathedral Psalter. The whole congregation joined heartily, the pointing being for the most part well observed. The Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis were from the service in F by Charles King, a composer of the last century. The anthem for the special choir alone was Boyce's "O where shall wisdom be found?" and was sung in a style which reflected much credit on Mr. Birch, who had acted as chorus-master. Stainer's anthem, "O clap your hands," was sung by the whole congregation, except the verse parts, which were left to the special choir. It was just the right thing for this congregation, and was very finely sung. After the sermon, "Round the Lord in glory seated" was sung to *Deerhurst*, at a rather slow pace, and the service closed with a rendering of the "Hallelujah Chorus," which was really astonishing in accuracy and vigour, especially considering that no attempt had been made to separate the enormous number of singers into their proper parts. The service was conducted throughout by Dr. Martin. Sir John and Lady Stainer occupied choir stalls, and amongst the congregation were most of the leaders of the Tonic Sol-fa world.

On Saturday, July 11th, some two hundred and fifty or three hundred persons assembled round the grave of John Curwen at Ilford Cemetery. The Rev. J. Knaggs offered prayer, and then delivered a very interesting speech, in which he spoke of the great service that Tonic Sol-fa was doing in South Africa, whence he has just returned from a visit. Mr. Robert Griffiths also addressed the meeting. At intervals during the proceedings the following pieces were sung, under the direction of Mr. J. B. Mellis:—"The sands of time," Sullivan's "Home-land," "Pilgrims of the night," and an "In Memoriam"—John Curwen."

The whole meeting passed off in a most devout manner.

On the 14th inst., the conversazione of the Curwen Club was held. The Club sang a selection of pieces, under the direction of Mr. J. A. Birch and other members. Solos were sung by several friends, but we must single out Mr. J. L. Berry for his splendid performance of Tosti's "Venetian Song." Mr. J. Spencer Curwen in a speech referred to the good work which was being done by the Club bearing his name. The Rev. T. W. Drury, as principal of the Church Missionary College, spoke of the usefulness of the Tonic Sol-fa method in foreign countries, where the missionaries could only carry on their work by means of singing to the natives and getting them to do likewise; and by experience they had found that the only way of achieving this end was by means of the Tonic Sol-fa method.

The Association of Tonic Sol-fa Choirs and the Tonic Sol-fa Composition Club united for a conversazione on July 15th. Mr. W. Roston Bourke, of the London School Board, presided, and in a chatty speech gave some recollections of his early experiences as one of the earliest members of the Composition Club, together with a testimony to the value of the method in his work amongst village choirs and schools. Dr. McBurney, the latest addition to the roll of Mus. Docs. from the Tonic Sol-fa ranks, spoke of the progress the method was making in Australia, where he has been its pioneer. Mr. J. Spencer Curwen referred to the public attention which was being called to the method by the Jubilee meetings, and had only been able to find one adverse press critic, whose opinion that Tonic Sol-faists were "outside the pale of cultured musicians" amused the audience mightily. The venerable Mr. John Evans told of his personal intimacy with John Curwen. Mr. Seward, the composer of many popular pieces and leader of Tonic Sol-fa propaganda in America, had a satisfactory report to make of Sol-fa doings there. A Japanese gentleman addressed the meeting in quaint English, but made his meaning very clear. He had examined as an outsider the various systems of teaching music, and found Tonic Sol-fa to be the most natural and scientific. In Japan the Jubilee celebrations had already been held with much success. Mr. McNaught, coming straight from his last rehearsal for the Crystal Palace Concert, made a short congratulatory speech. The speech-making was relieved by refreshments, gossip, and a programme of music composed by members of the Composition Club, and performed by Tonic Sol-fa executants. Mr. Holmes' West London Choral Association seemed hardly up to its usual high standard. Mr. Nixon's part-song, "The Sunbeam and the Maiden," took the fancy of the audience most; while of the solos Price's "Twilight Dreams," excellently sung by Mrs. Nixon, was about the best. As might be expected from Tonic Sol-fa composers, the part-songs showed, on the whole, to much better advantage than the solos.

On Thursday, July 16th, an interesting competition in singing and music-reading took place, between choirs from London Board Schools. The challenge medallion was awarded to the Fleet Road School, conducted by Mr. J. Harris, the previous holders, Beresford Street School, under Mr. J. J. Nimmo, coming second. Sir John Stainer and Mr. W. G. McNaught were adjudicators. Speeches were made by Lady George Hamilton, Mr. Bourke, and Sir Philip Magnus. Mr. McNaught congratulated the Board on the great advance in musical knowledge in their schools.

In the evening of the same day, the President of the Tonic Sol-fa College held a reception, "by invitation only," at the galleries of the Royal Society of British Artists. Here were gathered together all the best known of Sol-fa conductors and teachers, members of

the College Council, provincial and colonial delegates, with a large proportion of ladies. The guests were received on entering by Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Curwen, but otherwise the evening was without formality of any kind, and friendly gossip, renewals of old acquaintanceship, interchange of experiences and "shop" talk *ad lib.*, were the order of the night. Songs were sung by Mr. G. E. Holmes (of Chicago), Miss Edith Hands, whose fine contralto was much appreciated; and Mr. Durward Lely, the well-known operatic tenor. On this occasion again all the soloists were Tonic Sol-faists, as were also the accompanists, Mrs. McNaught and Mr. Frank Proudman. An interesting exhibition of the Edison Phonograph created much amusement, and Messrs. Curwen, Venables, and McNaught were bottled up for the benefit of future generations of Tonic Sol-faists. Mr. Curwen's invitations had been generously extended to musicians not immediately connected with Tonic Sol-fa, many of whom were present to show their interest in the movement.

On Friday, the 17th, a conference on the question of continuing the musical education of children after leaving school was held, the discussion being opened by Mr. McNaught. In the evening a meeting was held in Exeter (Large) Hall, Judge Lushington in the chair. Coming after so many festive informalities, and on the eve of the great day of all, a cut-and-dried Exeter Hall meeting did not draw; the audience was not large, and the proceedings somewhat tame. We must, however, mention the excellent singing of the Swansea Choir and also of Mr. Phillip's Choir. During the evening Mr. Robert Griffiths, the veteran and esteemed Secretary of the College, was presented with his portrait and a purse of gold, in well-deserved recognition of forty years' service to the Tonic Sol-fa movement.

Saturday, the 18th, was to be the last and greatest day of the week's rejoicings, and the programme of the day's doings at the Crystal Palace included a Choral Competition, three great concerts on the Handel orchestra, and a mass concert in the grounds; while odd moments were to be filled up with organ recitals, operetta performances, band concerts, and an exhibition of Tonic Sol-fa curiosities, portraits, pictures, and literature.

One of the most interesting items was the Choral Competition, at which Sir John Stainer acted as adjudicator. Six choirs of sixty voices each competed for two prizes, one of £15 and one of £10. After a sharp tussle between the Nottingham Choir and City of London Choir, the first prize went to the last named whose singing can only be called perfection. Their singing to words at first sight of an anthem specially composed by Mr. Charles Nixon, of the Tonic Sol-fa Composition Club, was a marvellous performance. This anthem contained most difficult transitions, going from D major to C minor and then to B minor, and yet the winning choir sang it as perfectly as if it had been rehearsed for weeks before the contest. The Chesterfield and Peckham Choirs were highly commended by Sir John Stainer. The last-named choir would have done better if the conductor had refrained from beating time with his foot whilst his choir sang the sight test, and Chesterfield would have won a higher position had they not sung the test so slowly. It must, however, be explained that this last-named choir had been travelling all night, and only just arrived in time to take part in the contest.

The children's concert in the morning attracted a large audience. The singing of the children, all of whom were holders of Tonic Sol-fa certificates, deserves highest praise. Mr. A. L. Cowley, who conducted in place of the late Mr. J. Proudman, kept his army of young voices well in hand, and the result leaves no room for adverse criticism. During the concert he gave the children a drill in singing from hand signs.

The afternoon concert was by a choir of some four thousand provincial singers, under the baton of Mr. Leonard Venables. The reputation of the country singers, especially of the Welsh Tonic Sol-faists, who were well represented, roused great expectations. The tenors and basses were a remarkably fine body of voices; too fine indeed, for they overweighed the lady singers very much. The sopranos, besides being numerically weak in comparison, were, in our opinion, badly placed, being quite at the side of the orchestra, and, consequently, though they did their best, they were frequently hardly audible against the overpowering male voices. Apart from the unequal balance of parts, the singing was of a very high standard. Heller's "Song of Victory," which formed the first part, had evidently been well rehearsed, and went through with only one or two slips. The soprano soloist was Miss Emily Spada, and in the three concerted numbers Mr. Venables succeeded in keeping his choir well down, so that the solo part was not smothered, as it so often is with a choir of such large dimensions. The attention to light and shade throughout was good, and the band, though rather weak for the size of the choir, was well up to its work. The second part consisted of a number of part-songs, together with Mr. Cowley's prize ode, "The Spirit of Song." The ode, an interesting composition, was badly marred, especially in the soft passages, by a most obtrusive organ accompaniment, which was the more surprising as in all the other parts of the concert Mr. Weston made very judicious use of his instrument. Paxton's "Hail, blushing goddess," and Bishop's "O by rivers," were delicately sung; and an old favourite, Congreve's "Fisherman," was given with much spirit. An anthem, specially composed as a test by Mr. Charles Nixon, was sung at sight with an ease which showed that the choir could have faced a much more difficult trial. The Kaffir Choir, now touring in England, which has been trained on Tonic Sol-fa lines, sang a couple of pieces amid much interest.

The Mass Concert in the grounds, which immediately followed, could not by any stretch of courtesy be called a success. The two bands which were to accompany, were placed at opposite corners and almost out of sight of the conducting stand. For each of the five national airs attempted there was a different conductor, not one of them being accustomed to lead large bodies of singers. The result was that bands, singers, and conductors each went their separate ways, with results painful to the ear.

At seven o'clock the last great event of the series was commenced before an immense audience, three thousand metropolitan singers being assembled for a performance of Schubert's "Song of Miriam," and a selection of smaller works. Mr. McNaught, on taking his place at the conductor's desk, received a great ovation from choir and audience alike. It had been half feared that the town-bred singers would suffer by comparison with the sonorous country voices of the afternoon; but the Londoners were on their mettle, and the first few bars showed that they had nothing to fear from the comparison. The solo part was taken by a selected and very competent body of sopranos; the choir, much more evenly balanced than that of the afternoon, was well under the conductor's control from the beginning, and gave a really fine rendering of the music. The dramatic and descriptive passages were well entered into, and the closing fugue, taken at a tremendous pace, was well worked up to its climax. At the close of the cantata the audience showed its appreciation by sustained applause, and veteran Sol-faists freely expressed the opinion that nothing better had ever been produced at the numerous Palace concerts given under Sol-fa auspices.

An ear test, specially written by Sir John Stainer, in the form of a C. M. tune, was given out part by part on

the organ, taken down in writing by the choir, and performed with great accuracy on the first hearing.

The second part opened with another performance of Mr. Cowley's ode, the composer being called to the platform at the close. Pinsuti's part-song, "The Song to Pan," was crisp and bright. In the sombre minor passages of Gounod's "By Babylon's wave" the pitch was well sustained, the fugue passage was steady and stately, and the band gave full effect to the dramatic orchestration. Mr. Henry Leslie's arrangement of "The Lass of Richmond Hill" was sung with much spirit and highly appreciated. Dr. McBurney's choral march, the familiar madrigal, "In going to my lonely bed," and the march for choir and band from Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, closed the programme. This concert, with its splendid execution of a well-varied selection, was the best thing of the day, and furnished a brilliant climax to the whole series of the Jubilee celebrations.

Tonic Sol-fa.

BY GEORGE H. LAWRENCE.

II.—ITS PROGRESS AND SUCCESS.

IN 1844 Mr. Curwen became minister of the Congregational Chapel at Plaistow, which locality, through his connection and residence there, was, up to a very recent date, the headquarters of Tonic Sol-fa. He promptly introduced the system as a means of improving the musical service in his own church, and pushed it vigorously wherever he could find openings or disciples.

By 1851 the movement had made sufficient progress to call for the issue of the *Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, and in the same year the publishers of "Cassell's Popular Educator," then at the height of its immense popularity, asked Mr. Curwen to write a series of articles on his system. These articles, spread as they were all over the kingdom, brought an enormous influence to bear on the propagation of the new method. In 1853 the Tonic Sol-fa Association was formed, on the bold basis of admitting no one to membership without possession of a certificate showing a certain amount of proficiency. This association, of which Mr. Curwen was president, devoted itself to the promotion of psalmody and the spread of musical knowledge; and meetings, classes, concerts, and demonstrations of all kinds were held under its auspices for over twenty years, when it was superseded by the Tonic Sol-fa College. In 1855 the association was bold enough to issue a general invitation to all singers in London who had been students of the method to a meeting in Finsbury Chapel, a moderate attendance only being expected. The response, however, was such that the unsuccessful applicants for admission blocked the streets outside. In this year also Mr. Curwen published the first complete work which appeared in the notation—Romberg's "Song of the Bell"—and by the close of 1856 there were computed to be twenty thousand persons more or less conversant with the new system.

The advocates of Tonic Sol-fa had always laid stress on its suitability for teaching children, and in 1857 the association arranged the first children's concert ever given on the Handel orchestra. Three thousand children formed the choir, and the audience, numbering thirty thousand, was stated in the newspapers of the day to be the largest that had ever assembled to

hear a musical performance. The concert was so good as to elicit unanimous expressions of approval from critics and newspapers, and public attention was drawn to the method in larger degree than ever. The following extract is from the *Crystal Palace News* of the time:—

"This day was characterised by one of the greatest and most unexpected successes the Palace ever saw. It had been announced that the association known by the strange name of the Tonic Sol-fa would give a concert, and that the music would be sung by a body of three thousand children. The morning broke cold, damp, and foggy, and a drizzling rain fell without intermission, until towards two o'clock, when it cleared up and became tolerably fine. Notwithstanding the rain, at an early hour large crowds of visitors began to assemble at London Bridge, awaiting the departure of each train; and as the empty carriages were drawn up to the platform, they were constantly filled by dense masses of infantry, who assaulted the carriage doors amid loud shouts. Fresh carriages continually supplied the place of those which were whisked away; and still the fierce assault continued with unabated vigour. One platform was found insufficient, and the Brighton station was pressed into the service, and many trains made up and despatched from its platform. Still, however, the crowd increased, and not only the platform, the booking offices, and the covered pavement in front of the station were covered with struggling beauty, but even the open space towards London Bridge was choked with ladies and children, who, as the soaking rain descended, groaned under their sad fate and umbrellas, and, despairing of gaining an entrance into the station, made frantic efforts to sell their tickets at enormous sacrifices, and ultimately departed to their respective homes in tears and a cab. Many hundreds were unable to gain admission, and the scene at London Bridge was absolutely distressing."

This demonstration, having called the attention of school teachers everywhere, led them to investigate the merits of the new system, with the result of its gradual substitution for the old methods, until at the present time a school teacher who instructs his pupils on any other plan is becoming, in elementary schools, quite a rarity.

In 1860 Mr. Curwen organised the first competition amongst Tonic Sol-fa choirs, which was held at the Crystal Palace on September 4th, a choir from the West Riding of Yorkshire carrying off the first prize. These competitions, usually accompanied by a festival concert on the same day, have continued to be a regular feature in Tonic Sol-fa work. Seven years later an opportunity for comparison with choirs trained on different methods was eagerly accepted by the Tonic Sol-faists. An invitation to compete in the International Competition at the Paris Exhibition of 1867 found, amongst English choral societies, only one ready for the fray, and the nation was represented in the contest by a Tonic Sol-fa choir alone, Mr. Joseph Proudman being the conductor. The singing of this choir created an immense sensation in Paris, and while they were nominally refused the first prize on account of their being a "mixed" choir, while the others consisted of male voices only, the committee created for them a special "prize of equality," with a gold medal. This success was followed in 1872 by equally satisfactory results at the National Music meetings at

the Crystal Palace, where the first prize for large choirs was taken by Mr. Proudman's choir; and the first and second prizes for smaller choirs were both awarded to Tonic Sol-fa choirs, under Mr. McNaught and Mr. Venables respectively.

Tonic Sol-fa by this time had spread all over the country, and classes and choirs trained on the system were flourishing everywhere. It is both unnecessary and impossible to trace their development and increase in further detail, but a word must be said as to the Tonic Sol-fa College, which was founded in 1869, and has since then been the fount of authority in all Tonic Sol-fa matters. As the number of teachers of the method increased, Mr. Curwen felt the necessity of ensuring, so far as practicable, their competence to represent fairly and to the best advantage the principles they taught, and also of raising the general quality of the teaching. The Tonic Sol-fa College was therefore established, after a great deal of strenuous effort, its objects being to train teachers of the method, to grant certificates of proficiency to both teachers and students, and generally to advance by whatever means it could the cause of music in general and of Tonic Sol-fa in particular. Very early in its career an opportunity arose for the College to take a leading part in a movement for the defence of music itself, as apart from any system of teaching or notation. In 1869 Tonic Sol-faists had obtained from the Government the recognition of their system in State-aided schools on equal terms with the Staff Notation. But two years later the Education Department issued a new code, in which the grant for music itself was altogether withdrawn. It was afterwards found that the reason for this retrograde step was that the inspectors were unable to examine in the subject. Mr. Curwen and his supporters at once organised protests, deputations, and other means of pressure, and ultimately succeeded, the department agreeing to replace music in the list of "paying" subjects, and to appoint inspectors competent to examine in it. The question of system of teaching being left to the option of teachers soon settled itself, and the now almost universal adoption of the Tonic Sol-fa method by school teachers is one of the most powerful testimonies to its value. Their pockets being directly affected by success or failure, the teachers have very practical reasons for knowing and choosing the easiest and quickest system on which to train their scholars.

It may be remarked here that Tonic Sol-fa to-day finds one of its best securities for future success in the remarkable footing it holds in school music. The London and 'all the leading provincial School Boards have officially recommended it to their teachers as the best method. It has almost driven out ear-singing; the number of children taught by ear in 1883 was 75 per cent. of the whole, against 19 per cent. taught by Tonic Sol-fa and 6 per cent. by Staff Notation; while for 1890 the figures are 60 per cent. by Tonic Sol-fa, 31 per cent. by ear, and 9 per cent. by Staff. This extraordinary change, having been brought about by the voluntary action of the teachers, may be left to speak for itself. There are now two and a half millions of children being taught singing on the Tonic Sol-fa system in the elementary public schools of the country, and if we are not in a few years a "musical nation" it will not be the fault of our school teachers.

The death of Mr. Curwen in 1880, while deeply regretted by Tonic Sol-faists everywhere, and more especially by those who had been intimately associated with him, had no prejudicial effect on the progress of the movement, which had long before become too powerful to be dependent on any one man. Mr. Curwen's wise forethought had provided in the College and its council an organisation perfectly competent to carry on his work. The functions of the College have now attained enormous proportions and importance. It is both a teaching and examining body. The total number of its certificates issued, ranging from the modest "Junior" to the full-blown "Fellowship," is not far short of half a million, and the issue proceeds at the rate of from twenty to twenty-five thousand annually. The course of study and examination has gradually been enlarged, until it now includes all branches and stages of the art and science of music. The higher certificates, for the degrees of Licentiate and Fellow, are of a severity which makes them hardly available to any save professional musicians, and an increasing value is being attached to them in the musical world. Another important feature is the system of "Postal Classes," which were first invented by the College, and have since been imitated by many institutions and private teachers. These have been the means of affording instruction and education to many an isolated student unable to avail himself of the personal services of a teacher.

The proof of the Tonic Sol-fa pudding has been emphatically in the eating. Believers in the system can to-day almost dispense with argument, for the convincing results of fifty years' trial are on every side. The performances by such choirs as those of Mr. McNaught and Mr. Venables of the most difficult oratorios of both classical and modern composers have silenced the critics who used to relegate Tonic Sol-fa to the nursery and the schoolroom. The success of numbers of Tonic Sol-fa musicians in examinations for musical degrees at the Universities and elsewhere has replied to those who maintained the system to be useless in the higher branches of musical study. Publishers testify to the public estimation and demand by issuing every important choral work simultaneously in both notations. Solo vocalists, organists, choirmasters, and conductors on every hand come forward to acknowledge the help they derive from the method in the practice of their profession. Newspaper critics have done with sneering, and admit Tonic Sol-faists to an acknowledged position amongst the musical forces of the day. Amongst leading musicians who have during the last few years given public adhesion to the principles of the system are reckoned such names as Stainer, Turpin, Bridge, Prout, Gaul, and Barnby. All round the world, literally "from China to Peru," its adherents are doing their best to spread the method which they have found to so fully justify its old description—"the easy, cheap and true"; and under such conditions Tonic Sol-fa seems bound to go on and prosper. Sol-faists are earnest and enthusiastic musicians, and their zeal will have much influence on the music of the nation.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL SINGING.

MR. F. G. FITCH, the Precentor of Christ Church, Enfield, recently gave an interesting lecture on the above subject in connection with the North London Auxiliary of the Sunday School Union. Mr. Fitch said:—The importance of singing in Sunday schools could scarcely be exaggerated, as they would be convinced if they reflected for a moment on what Sunday-school worship would be without it. He had heard it said by some good people that it was displeasing to the Almighty to prepare singing for His worship, but those who said that, would be among the first to criticise a minister if he did not prepare his sermon, and therefore he could not see the logic of their position. Dealing first with what music they would sing in the schools, Mr. Fitch said there was a variety of music to which he had a great aversion, though it was very popular. Sankey's hymns were esteemed very highly by a section of the Christian Church, and there was an explanation of that, for however deficient the music might be from a musical point of view, though the structure was poor and the air frequently wretched, yet it had the element of rhythm in it to a degree which seemed to carry all before it. In illustration of these remarks he dissected the tune set to the hymn "Ring the bells of heaven," and contrasted it with Sir John Stainer's tune to the hymn "There's a Friend for little children," of which, he said, the structural harmony was very adequate and complete, and in which all parts were balanced. The choir of Christ Church sang the hymn to demonstrate the lecturer's points. In discussing the question what to sing in Sunday schools, Mr. Fitch pointed out that if a book with some hundreds of hymns in it were used, probably only a very small proportion of them would be sung; there were some excellent tunes by various well-known composers published in cheap leaflet form, and if some thirty to fifty of these were put in practice it would be a sufficient start. He strongly advocated the appointment in every school of a precentor or precentress—for it might be either a gentleman or a lady, and ladies would have certain advantages for the position in singing in the same register as the children and in a knowledge of the pianoforte, which was more common among them than among gentlemen. A child's voice was a very delicate organ, and delicacy and care were necessary in using it. Fifty per cent. of the boys produced for singing in the Christ Church Choir had been defective on the ground that they had practically ruined their voices by singing out as they had been encouraged to do. It was only in recent years that the structure of the vocal organs had been accurately discovered. The voice produced by them was called the register, and that, roughly speaking, was divided into thick and thin. The division between the two took place on F sharp, and all notes above that should be sung on the thin register, or the voice would be injured. It was impossible to tell anybody how to sing on the thick and how to sing on the thin; but if children were made to sing softly, they could not sing a high note on anything but the thin register. The children should be taught to enunciate clearly, to strike smartly the first and last consonants in a word, and the vowel sound should be sung with an open mouth, as all vowel sounds could be sung. The teacher or precentor should never sing with the pupils, but should sing the piece through first, point out all it is necessary to notice, and then the children should sing the piece, and the result would be that they would learn in about half the time that would be spent if the teacher sang with them. He had heard an excellent choir coming from Rotherhithe singing so well that they gained the approbation of Sir John Stainer, and had been told by the precentor that they practised for only one hour a week. If only one-fourth of the time of such a weekly class were devoted to singing exercises the effect would be very marked. In illustration of the lecturer's remarks the

boys of Christ Church Choir went through a vocal exercise, ending by reaching the upper C—a practical illustration, said Mr. Fitch, of what could be done by singing on the thin register. At the Royal Academy of Music, the requirement for a soprano voice of a lady who was to be a professional singer was that it should reach B natural. The necessity for a week-night class was apparent, and various devices for insuring the attendance of the children were resorted to. He did not favour the system of paying the boys for attending, but pleaded guilty to giving them a tea when they came. He did not think any tune for singing in Sunday schools should go beyond E flat. He did not think it desirable to have a choir in the school singing apart from the rest, but believed in the application of the idea that "a little heaven leaveneth the whole lump." On the question of accompaniment, he said that if the choice lay between a pianoforte, an American organ, or a harmonium, he would prefer the piano. Probably the ideal instrument would be a combination of the piano and American organ. He feared that his opinions were very heterodox, but he preferred a grand piano, which might be got for very little more than one of the other sort, and he wished the instrument, whatever it was, to be placed where it could be heard—preferably in the centre of the room. Another point upon which he laid emphasis was the advantage of singing in parts. He confessed that he could not understand grown men and women singing the air. He thought a plan might be arranged for placing those singing each part near together without disturbing greatly the order of a school. In conclusion, he bespoke the hearty co-operation of the teachers in the work if a preceptor were appointed.

THE DUTIES OF A CONDUCTOR.—The conductor of the modern orchestra has a manifold task. First of all comes the technical drill, which is the most wearing of all. The ruling of a band of sensitive musicians is in itself not an easy matter. To repress an enthusiastic 'cellist and cause him to subordinate his phrases to a viola passage which he considers of minor importance, or to subdue an over-zealous trombonist, is not a trifling thing to do. But before even this is done the conductor's work has begun, and he has carefully studied the score, that he may have a clear idea of what he intends to do. There is generally an antagonism between the strict conductor and his men; the former desiring too much rehearsal, the latter too little. The discipline of an orchestra should be as rigid as that of a military company, and the distinctions of rank are almost as fixed; it is a matter of infinite importance to the musician whether he sits in the first row or the second, or at the fifth desk or the tenth. The ideal conductor must not only feel the emotion of a work, but he must be able to express it to his men, by words at rehearsal, by gesture at the concert. The beating of the time is very important, as an indecisive beat will cause the attacks to be irregular. Many composers sin in this respect, and cannot conduct their own works with nearly as good results as are achieved by the trained conductor. The signalling of the different entrances of the instruments is another task of the conductor; if the kettle-drums have had fifty-seven measures rest they should count them, and know exactly when they are to resume playing; but, as a matter of fact, they rest with calm tranquillity on the shoulders of the conductor, and rely on him to give them the signal to play the first note of their phrase. These are a few of the chief duties of a modern orchestra conductor. To those who imagine that to shake a stick rhythmically over an orchestra is to lead it, they may seem exaggerated, but they are rather under than over-stated.

Obituary.

MR. HENRY FARMER.

On June 25th, after a long illness, borne with great fortitude and cheerfulness, Mr. Henry Farmer closed his mortal eyes on the scenes which his genius has done so much to make brighter and happier for those among whom his lot had been cast.

Born in 1819 at Old Lenton, a suburb of Nottingham, he received his early education in the High Pavement Day School. His musical genius manifested itself early; he was, indeed, a sort of prodigy on the violin. One of his first public appearances was in the band at a musical service held in St. Mary's Church, and we learn from an eyewitness that he had on that occasion to stand on a chair in order to see the music on the desk. At the early age of eighteen he became organist at the High Pavement Chapel, and he remained in this capacity for the long period of forty years, down to 1879.

To Mr. Farmer's varied musical genius, displayed in song and glee and dance, and in his compositions and tutors for the violin, 'cello, piano, harmonium, and organ; to his brilliant execution on the violin, his favourite and professional instrument; and to his wonderful versatility in playing almost every instrument of vibrating string and tongue, the musical world in general will testify. At the early age of twenty he wrote a Mass, which to this day is a great favourite in the United States, though not so often heard in this country. He had but few facilities for his early musical education, and we may practically regard him as a self-taught genius. He cultivated his musical endowments by rigorous self-denial and self-training, which he maintained with untiring industry. Perhaps no man ever toiled harder in the work of his fascinating profession, and to his great credit it must be recorded that, amidst all the glamour and excitement of a long artistic life, he bore the character of a refined and cultured gentleman.

When Dr. Martineau's Liturgy was adopted at Nottingham, Mr. Farmer wrote most effective music for the responses, as well as a Te Deum.

Many hymns, too, of peculiar measure he made available for public service by his ready power, notably "Blest the wave, Christian," and "Alleluiah! best and sweetest of the sounds"—all bright and inspiring melodies.

At his grave a band of singers, assembled from the Boys' Day School and the Chapel Choir, sang his setting of "The Pilgrims of the Night." A large number of musical and other friends assembled at the funeral, which was conducted by the Rev. James Harwood, B.A., who, on the following day, preached a memorial sermon on the Divine Gift and the Human Culture that are combined in every true artist's life.

Echoes from the Churches.

(Paragraphs for this column should reach us by the 20th of the month.)

METROPOLITAN.

BARBICAN.—The choir of the Congregational Church have presented Mr. George H. Male, the organist, with a drawing-room lamp on the occasion of his marriage to Miss Florence Hartley.

CITY TEMPLE.—The African Choir sang here during the evening service the day after they landed.

ISLINGTON.—The choir of Union Chapel, under the direction of Mr. Robert Williamson, and accompanied by Mr. Fountain Meen, gave an excellent concert in

River Street Chapel, Essex Road, on June 29th, in aid of the fund for the extinction of the debt.

LAMBETH.—The annual excursion of Upton Choir took place on July 4th to Swanscombe, Kent, the arrangements being carried out by Mr. J. Underwood (treasurer) and Mr. H. Ford Benson (organist and choirmaster). Favoured by glorious weather, a most enjoyable day was spent. About thirty members sat down to a strawberry tea. The Secretary, Mr. W. Staniland (author of "Songs after Sunset"), announced a generous donation of five guineas to the choir fund from Mr. James Clark, one of the deacons, this being for the specific purpose of providing the choir with the complete Bristol Tune Book, just published. The Upton *répertoire* now includes Hymns Ancient and Modern (complete), The Bristol Tune Book (complete), Congregational Psalmist (anthems), Congregational Church Hymnal (anthems), Cathedral Psalter, and numerous octavo anthems published by Novello & Co. A programme of vocal music, under Mr. Ford Benson's direction, added to the day's enjoyment. On Sunday, July 12th, the Annual Sunday School Festival was celebrated, the music, of a high-class character, being admirably rendered by the children. The chapel, prettily decorated with flowers, etc., was crowded to overflowing at each service. Mr. Benson's voluntaries were: Overture "Athalie" (Mendelssohn), "Festive March in D" (Smart), and "Allegretto from Violin Sonata in A" (Handel).

MILE END.—A cantata, entitled "Jesus of Nazareth," was given in Trinity Congregational Church by the members of the Young People's Guild, to an audience of six hundred. Mr. W. Young presided at the organ, and the solos were sung by Miss Read, Miss Clogg, Mr. H. E. Montague, and Mr. Peters.

SOUTH NORWOOD.—An organ, costing £450, has been placed in the Congregational Church.

STRATFORD.—Mr. G. H. Lawrence, on resigning the post of organist and choirmaster of Maryland Point Presbyterian Church, Stratford, E., was presented by the choir with a handsomely fitted toilet travelling-bag. Mr. H. W. Braine, who succeeds Mr. Lawrence as choirmaster at the above church, has been given a rose-wood clockwork metronome and presentation baton by the choir of Carpenter's Road Chapel, Stratford, where he has been honorary choirmaster since 1881.

PROVINCIAL.

BAILDON.—The organ in the Moravian Church has been renovated, and on June 25th Dr. Spark, of Leeds, opened it with a recital. There was a large congregation present, and the organist displayed the capabilities of the instrument to the full.

BEDFORD.—The organ in St. Mary's Wesleyan Chapel has been restored and rebuilt.

BIRMINGHAM.—In connection with the opening of the organ in Ebenezer Chapel, Steelhouse Lane, Gaul's cantata, "The Holy City," was performed; the composer presiding at the organ, and Mr. J. H. Adams conducting.

DISS.—The anniversary services in connection with the Independent Sunday School were held on Sunday, June 21st, when sermons were preached by the Rev. Peter Morrison, of Norwich, morning and evening; and in the afternoon a recital was given by Mr. W. L. Palmer, organist of the Unthinks Road Baptist Church, Norwich, on the fine new organ lately placed in the chapel. At each of the services selections of hymns were given by the chapel choir, augmented for the occasion by the introduction of a few elder scholars; and a vocal solo was very effectively rendered by Miss Pullen, at the afternoon service. The day's proceedings were in every way an entire success, the organ recital by Mr. W. L. Palmer being greatly appreciated.

ECCLESHILL.—Mr. Thomas Baxter, for many years honorary organist of the Congregational Church, recently died suddenly.

ELLAND.—The choir of Providence Congregational Chapel had a very enjoyable excursion to York and places in the vicinity of that city, on Saturday, the 11th ult.

FOLKESTONE.—On the 6th ult. Mr. J. M. Linom, the energetic and esteemed secretary of the local Nonconformist Choir Union, was presented by the members with a handsome silver-mounted travelling dressing-case. Mr. W. Bramley, one of the conductors, made the presentation, and was supported by the Rev. A. J. Palmer and Mr. F. C. Lepper. Mr. Linom suitably responded.

GRIMSBY.—A new organ has been placed in the Primitive Methodist Chapel, Hottergate Street.

GRINGLEY-ON-THE-HILL.—A new organ has been placed in the Primitive Methodist Chapel. A recital was given by Mr. Mills, organist to Lord Manvers.

HALIFAX.—The Stannary Congregational Choir had their annual outing on Saturday, June 20th. They were accompanied by their esteemed organist and choirmaster, Mr. E. Hanson, and a few friends. Taking advantage of Swann and Leach's excursion, they visited Hawes, the popular resort in Wensleydale. Arriving at Hawes about eleven o'clock, they made for Gayle, where a good meal was provided. After singing several pieces of music the home journey was commenced, all having thoroughly enjoyed the outing.

LIGHTCLIFFE.—On Wednesday, the 8th inst., the choir of Lightcliffe Congregational Church had their annual trip, the place selected being Studley Royal. Really splendid weather favoured the proceedings, and the party, who were accompanied by Mr. Charles Wood, A.C.O., organist and choirmaster, had a thoroughly enjoyable day's outing.

RIPPONDEN.—An organ recital, together with a choral concert, was given in the Zion Congregational Church on June 27th, the proceeds of which were in aid of the fund for improving the organ. The principals were:—Miss Wadsworth, contralto; Mr. Barker, tenor; Mr. Schofield, bass; Mr. B. Wadsworth, organist; Mr. John Howorth, conductor. Choruses were rendered by a combined choir from the following churches: West End Congregational, Rishworth Baptist, and Zion Congregational. The selections of music rendered were chiefly from Handel and Haydn. The performance was exceedingly creditable to Mr. Wadsworth.

TOTTINGTON, NEAR BURY.—On Sunday, June 28th, R. H. Wilson's cantata, "The Son of Man," was very effectively rendered in Green Mount Congregational Church, under the able direction of Mr. Joshua Knowles, the composer presiding at the organ. The principals were:—Miss Johnson, Mrs. Wilson, Mr. Creak, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Beech, Mr. Tomlinson. The choruses were admirably rendered by the choir.

WEM.—Mrs. Jarvis, on the occasion of her marriage, has been presented with a tea-service by the choir.

WINGRAVE.—An American organ has been purchased for the Congregational Church.

Reviews.

The Bristol Tune Book. Third Series. Compiled and edited by Frederick Morgan and H. Elliot Button. (Novello & Co., London; and W. & F. Morgan, Clare Street, Bristol.)—The Bristol has long been recognised as one of the best tune-books. The selection is altogether admirable, the harmonies thoroughly congregational, and the arrangement of the book very simple.

Since the last edition was published, many new and popular tunes have appeared; and it was felt that, if the "Bristol" was to hold its own, it was desirable that a supplement should be prepared. This has been very judiciously done. The preface states that the work has been prepared chiefly to provide tunes for many fine hymns of peculiar metres contained in the Rev. W. Garrett Horder's "Congregational Hymns." But, in addition, we are glad to notice that such tunes as the following are included—viz., "Hushed was the Evening Hymn" (Sullivan), "Diademata" (Elvey), "Come unto Me" (Dykes), "Day of Rest" (Elliott), "Clarence" (Sullivan), "Vox Dilecti" (Dykes), "Scopas" (Hancock), "St. Chrysostom" (Barnby), "Pilgrims" (Smart), "Nicæa" (Dykes), "Praise my Soul" (Goss). Many composers have written excellent tunes specially for this work. The book, in its complete form, is adapted to almost every hymn-book, and it would be difficult to find a more useful selection of tunes.

Show Yourselves Joyful. Full anthem for a harvest festival or general use. By W. Henry Maxfield, F.C.O. (Watson & Co., 43, Blackfriars Street, Deansgate, Manchester. 3d.)—A simple and very melodious anthem.

The Organist's Quarterly Journal. Part XCI. This number consists of two pieces: a long fantasia in F, by E. H. Lemare, F.C.O., and a march by Dr. Sangster. The fantasia is cleverly written, but it requires a good deal of playing. The march is fairly easy, and is a very useful piece for organists.

The Song of the Sower. By E. Elliot Button. (Joseph Williams, 24, Berners Street, W. 6d.)—This ode, which is to be sung by five thousand voices at the Crystal Palace on the 15th inst., is an effective composition if well sung. Though by no means easy, it is not beyond an ordinary choir.

Elihu. A Sacred Cantata. By Walter Lyle Biggs. (The London Music Publishing Co., Ltd., 7, Great Marlborough Street, W. 2s. 6d.)—Church choirmasters, wanting something for performance at choir concerts, will find this a very suitable work. No great demand is made on either soloists or chorus.

To Correspondents.

INQUIRER.—It is in the key of D flat.

PRESTO.—Not so fast, please. If you do as you propose, you will find yourself liable for an action for infringement of copyright.

J. F. K.—He was born in 1825.

CANDID.—We think you were unwise. A little patience, and a little "give and take" would have settled the matter.

W. T. H. (Burton) and A. B. (Balham). Next month. Too late for August.

W. A. M.—(1) Your best way is to advertise and answer advertisements. (2) The certificate you mention would certainly help you to an appointment.

The following are thanked for their letters: A. F. (Norwich), J. T. (Liverpool), E. H. (Cambridge), C. D. (Exeter), J. T. F. (Rhyl), M. R. (Swansea), T. J. L. (Darlington), P. N. (Hull), T. L. G. (Cardiff), B. G. (Chester).

Staccato Notes.

M. JEAN DE RESKE has been seriously ill, but is well again.

M. PADEREWSKI gave a pianoforte recital before the Queen on the 2nd ult.

We have to announce the death, at the age of eighty, of Mrs. Mounsey Bartholomew, widow of the librettist of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Costa's *Eli* and *Naaman*, and herself a celebrated musician. At six years of age she was a pupil of Logier, and at nine she was mentioned by Spohr in his diary as a pianist of remarkable precocity. As far back as 1828 she was an organist at Clapton, and from 1837 for many years she held the post of organist at St. Vedast's, Foster Lane. It was for one of Miss Mounsey's classical concerts in 1843 that Mendelssohn composed the popular settings of "Hear my Prayer." The lady, who married Mr. Bartholomew in 1855, was the composer of an oratorio, *The Nativity*, produced by Hullah in 1855, a cantata dedicated to the Princess of Wales, and an enormous number of part-songs, songs, and organ pieces.

An African choir of undoubted excellence has been giving concerts at the Prince's Hall.

"THE Golden Legend" was performed at the Albert Hall on the occasion of the visit of the German Emperor. The spacious building was very full.

MADAME LEMMENS SHERRINGTON has accepted a professorship of singing at the Royal Academy.

THE "Song of Miriam" and "St. John's Eve" were recently performed at the Mile End Assembly Hall.

MR. STOCKLEY has withdrawn his resignation as choirmaster of the Birmingham Festival.

THE London School Board Vocal Competition resulted in Fleet Road School winning the prize, their voice training being admirable.

THE Chester Festival was held on the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th ult.

SOME sensation has been caused by the indefinite postponement of Mr. De Lara's "Light of Asia."

THE Prince of Wales presided at the Annual Meeting of the Royal College of Music.

Accidentals.

AN English organ-builder was one day asked what was thought of Mr. Blank as an organist.

"Sir," he said, with mock solemnity, "he is a most respectable man."

"Yes, I have no doubt of that; but I want to know how he ranks as a performer on the organ."

"Sir, he is a most exemplary man, and one who plays as though he were a charitable man."

"Now, would you mind telling me what you mean by saying he performs like a charitable man?"

"Well, if I must be explicit, Mr. Blank plays upon the organ as though he did not let his left hand know what his right hand was doing."

"You haven't heard anything until you have heard both sides," says a writer. This may be very pretty logic, but the bass drum refutes it.

Miss A. B. (after playing Wagner): "Oh, dear! I fairly murdered that piece."

MR. C. D.: "Oh! no, my dear Miss A. B., you executed it; delicate distinction, don't you know, between an atrocious murder and a brilliant execution."

AFTER a singer had "executed" the once popular song, "My Love Lies Dreaming," a rustic auditor broke the ensuing silence by muttering, "If she lies while she's dreamin', what sort of a crittur must she be when she's awake?"

THE tired song-singer who is compelled to respond to numberless *encores* may be said to be a victim to *add-verse* circumstances.